



NEW HAMPSHIRE DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

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How to Complete the NH Division of Historical Resources Area Form

Introduction

Historians in New Hampshire use the *NH Division of Historical Resources Area Form* to record and evaluate historical resources in three types of areas. Although the narrative may vary, the same form is used to record each type of area.

Town- and City-wide area forms: provide an overview of a town or city, its geography, history and architectural patterns of development, creating the framework for inventory efforts that follow. An extensive bibliography and base map of potential and already identified resources also aid future researchers. As the name suggests, the “area” surveyed in a town-wide area form is the entire town or city. A list of completed town-wide area forms appears in Appendix A.

Project area forms: most often are completed as part of the environmental planning that proceeds a publicly-funded, licensed or permitted project that can affect historical resources. In addition to providing historical and architectural information, project area forms are important planning tools that summarize previous survey efforts and determine the extent of additional needed survey. The surveyed area in a project area form is defined by the project and its possible effects.

Historic district area forms: summarize the history, architecture and significance of a group of resources that could be designated as a local historic district or listed in the National or New Hampshire State Registers of Historic Places. The area discussed in a historic district area form is defined by a cluster of historically or architecturally related resources.¹

These directions cover all three types of area forms. Where the directions vary for each type, this is noted under each section. These directions follow the same order as the area form, arranged numerically. As with all inventory projects, forms must be completed using letter-quality type. Computer-generated forms that vary in appearance should be approved prior to use. Color pencils, markers or printing should not be used since the colors will not reproduce in photocopies. Also, many kinds of color printing fade rapidly. The use of glue, white-out, tape or stick-on labels is not acceptable; these products quickly disintegrate.

¹ By coincidence, a modern construction project area can completely or partially overlap a historic district. In this case, an area form may serve both as a project area form and a historic district area form. Contact the NH Division of Historical Resources with questions as to format and content if needed when this occurs.

All labeling should be done with black indelible ink or with soft pencil on the back of photographs. Blank area forms and these directions also are available on the NH Division of Historical Resources' web site, <http://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/formsmanual.html>, or by e-mailing to preservation@nhdhr.state.nh.us.

These directions build on earlier guidance published by the NH Division of Historical Resources (NHDHR) and rely heavily on the National Register's Bulletin 16A, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, available from the NHDHR and online at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins.htm>.

One other type of inventory form is used in New Hampshire; an *NHDHR Individual Inventory Form* documents and evaluates individual historical properties, such a house, bridge or single commercial property. Although the first few pages may differ, individual inventory forms and area forms use the same continuation sheets for text, photographs and additional graphic information, such as copies of historic maps. Individual inventory forms are also available from NHDHR and its web site.

Form Page One

- 1. Type of Area Form:** Check which type of form is being completed.
- 2. Name of area:** Enter the name of the town, historic district, or project. If applicable, include a project number as well.
- 3. Location:** Locate the area, using street addresses or natural features, such as Oak Street, between First and Fifth avenues.
- 4. City or town:** Enter the name of the city or town where the area is located. If it is located in a village or area with its own named identity, place it in parenthesis after the town or city name, for example, "Concord (Penacook)." Include each town name if the area covers more than one municipality.
- 5. County:** Enter the applicable New Hampshire county(s): Belknap, Carroll, Cheshire, Coos, Grafton, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, Strafford and Sullivan.
- 6. USGS quadrangle name(s):** Enter the name(s) of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Quadrangle on which the area is located. Use the most recent quadrangle map available. Maps are usually on file in town or city halls or available in sporting goods or bookstores and online.
- 7. USGS scale:** Enter the scale of the map. In New Hampshire, the scale is most often 1:24 000. A few maps continue to be at a 1:25 000 scale.
- 8. UTM reference:** Enter one or more Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) grid references to identify the exact location of the area. References for areas greater than ten acres in size should be shown and measured as polygons. Preface the reference with the UTM zone. In New Hampshire, this is most often zone 19; the western part of the state is in zone 18. The zone is noted with other map key information.

If you are unfamiliar with UTM's, please call NHDHR for assistance. Detailed instructions are also available in National Register Bulletin No. 28, *Using the UTM Grid System to Record Historic Sites*, available at NHDHR or online at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins.htm>.

- 9. Inventory numbers in this area:** Enter the inventory form numbers for all previous survey efforts in the area, plus the numbers for any forms under preparation. This information is available by reviewing the town files at the NHDHR.
- 10. Setting:** Briefly describe the area and its setting. This description will vary depending on the size of the area. For a town, this description could read “Sparsely settled town at the foothills of the White Mountains, bisected by alluvial lands along the Baker River.” A project area could be “Two linear miles along a developing mixed-use state highway, characterized by properties dating from the 18th century through the present.”
- 11. Acreage:** Enter the acreage of the entire area, even if approximate. **Do not** enter miles square footage.
- 12. Preparer(s):** Enter the name(s) of the person(s) who surveyed the area and prepared the form.
- 13. Organization:** If applicable, enter the name of the organization or agency with which the preparer(s) is affiliated.
- 14. Date(s) of field survey:** Enter the date that the field work was completed.
- 15. Location map:** This map should show the area’s location in relation to nearby political boundaries or major features such as rivers or highways. **Indicate north with an arrow.** For project and historic district area forms, copies of USGS maps and small-scale town tax maps work well, with the area circled in a heavy black line.

Form Page Two

- 16. Sketch Map:** The purpose of a sketch map is to identify the location of potential historical resources, as well as their physical relation to natural features, former buildings and structures, and more recent construction.
- Draw a general map of the area showing all structures, buildings (old and new), sites, landscapes, roads and major natural features, as closely to scale as possible. Each structure or building should be identified with an open box. Every property documented on an individual inventory form should be numbered with its corresponding NHDHR inventory number. Other properties can be numbered with a street address or property name, as available. Buildings and features that are no longer standing should be indicated with a dashed line, even if approximate. Also label street names and natural features. **Indicate north with an arrow.**
- Some areas will be too large or too complex to clearly sketch in the space allotted for question 16; in these cases, sketch the map and photo key on a larger page folded to 8-1/2x11 inches and use a separate map as the photo key.
- Historic district area forms* -- All contributing buildings should be identified with shaded boxes, while the boxes for non-contributing properties should remain un-shaded. Each building and feature shown on the sketch map should be described under the form’s architectural description section (question #21).

Town-wide area forms – Mapping generated through a municipality’s planning department or geographic information system (GIS) may be used as a base for town-wide sketch maps. Large-scale black and white copies of USGS maps may be used as well, although the topographic lines can make other labeling difficult to read. The town-wide sketch map should also be used as the photograph key and to indicate historical designations and previous survey efforts (see question #22 and photograph section).

Form Page Three and Continuing

The next twelve questions are listed on page three. Answers to these questions should not be constrained to the small amount of space on page three. Use as much space as needed for each question and then continue with the remaining questions and answers. Use as many continuation sheets as needed. All pages should be numbered consecutively, followed by continuation sheets with graphic images and photographs.

The answers to these questions should build on each other. First the survey’s purpose and methods are explained, followed by a description of the area’s geography, history and resulting built resources. Considering the area’s history and resources, its significance and level of physical integrity are evaluated. For a historic district, the district’s boundary is then determined based on significance, integrity and visual changes in physical character and patterns of development. The questions conclude with a bibliography and visual documentation such as copies of historic and current maps and photographs.

17. Methods and Purpose:

Briefly explain the purpose of the area form and the methods used to gather survey data. Discuss how the field work and research were conducted, the data collected and recorded, and what sources of information were checked. Describe the extent of the surveyed area and how it was determined, i.e., whether driven by a project’s proposed area of impact, the presence of a cluster of historic properties, or a community’s planning objectives.

Project area forms – Although a general description of the project triggering the survey effort can be useful, detailed project information that will quickly become dated should **not** be included in the methodology statement. Examples of extraneous text include proposed locations of new construction or possible impacts to historical resources; this type of information is better suited for inclusion in other kinds of environmental documentation.

18. Geographical Context:

The natural environment can play an influential role in an area’s historical development, and its constraints or opportunities can shape tangible historical resources. Summarize the area’s geography, topography, climate, geology and/or natural resources, particularly those that have shaped the area’s history and built environment.

19. Historical Background:

The significance of an area’s historical resources can only be understood within the broader context of history and the factors that influence it. An area’s history can be compiled from town histories and publications, newspapers, research materials at historical society and libraries, oral histories, old maps and photographs, and deeds, census returns and other public records. Appendix C describes these sources

in more detail. Information from written sources, combined with the evidence inherent in the area's built resources, together will provide a cohesive history of the town, city or project area. While gathering this information, it may be helpful to compile a timeline to gauge where additional research is still needed.

In this section, describe the area's development and historical themes within a chronological framework. If useful as an organizing tool, divide the narrative into historical periods based on defining events or developmental phases, such as early travel routes, logging and paper-making, or suburbanization. Address the economic, social, geographic or political forces that affected the area's physical growth and the factors that contributed to the area's history, different or similar to other nearby communities or areas. Bring the area's history up to the present day.

Depending on how the survey area was defined, some discussion of its larger historical context will be needed. For example, if the area form is evaluating a historic village, discuss how the village developed within the greater setting of the town. Why at this location? How does this village's history compare to the history of other settlements in the town? When recording an entire town's history, how does the history of the town contrast with other towns in the region? Is it different or similar, and why?

Change is constant in New Hampshire's history. A thorough historical background narrative will be broader than the histories of the resources currently extant in the area. Although the construction of specific buildings or complexes may be noted as factors in an area's historical development, save the description of these structures' physical details for question #21, architectural description and comparative evaluation.

Also avoid narrating detailed accounts of specific events or family genealogies and instead focus on the broad events, activities or characteristics that make the area special or significant. Be specific in all references to history or location. Give dates and the proper names of all people and places and keep in mind the cold reader. Try to avoid bias in historic perspective, both in sources of research and in writing the historical narrative. As needed, cite bibliographic sources for specific historical facts. Footnotes may be used, or the author's last name, the date of publication and page number may be added parenthetically within the text. All cited sources should be listed in full in the bibliography (#27).

Copies of historic maps, drawings and photographs, attached to continuation sheets with staples, may be used to supplement the historical narrative. Note the bibliographic source and date on the continuation sheets and cross-reference the graphic materials in the narrative (i.e., "see page 16 for historic map").

Project area forms: The surveyed area in a project area form is usually defined by the needs of a modern project. Therefore, the history of a large project area may or may not be joined by common historical themes or contexts. This is most often the case for very large projects that span a number of communities. If needed, contact the NHDHR to discuss the best approach for this type of analysis.

20. Applicable NHDHR Historic Context(s):

Relying on the area's history as described on question #19, enter all historic contexts that apply to the surveyed area from the list in Appendix B, "NH Division of Historical Resources Historic Context List." If the surveyed area illustrates a historical context or theme not included in Appendix B, please note the context and how it is manifested in the area.

21. Architectural Description and Comparative Evaluation:

Begin this section with a summary paragraph(s) on the natural and human-made elements in the area, including prominent topographical features, structures, buildings, sites, objects and other kinds of

development. Note the general relationship of the resources to each other and their environment, character and condition.

Project and town-wide area forms: Describe in more detail the area's physical growth or change over time and the historic resources that remain in the area. As an organizing tool, it may be useful to divide the narrative into the historical time periods developed in question #19 or by architectural style or period. What are the most important buildings, sites, structures and objects in the area, and why are they important? What physically distinguishes this area from its surroundings? Discuss large or widespread trends as well as key resources. Were new roads or railroads constructed, neighborhoods subdivided, industrial complexes developed, or public buildings erected? Did one type of development spur another? What were the most popular or common architectural styles, building materials or property types during each period? Why were these styles, materials, or building types utilized over others? Was a prolific builder, developer or architect at work in the area? Of this development, what resources remain today? Describe key resources as needed. What has been removed and why? Bring the narrative up to the present day.

Historic district forms: Following the summary paragraph, include an entry for each building, structure, object or site in the area, listed sequentially by site or inventory number (keyed to the sketch map). Each entry should begin with a heading indicating site or inventory number, property name, address, date, resource type, and recommended contributing or non-contributing status in the district. Headings should be set off with bold type or underlining. Follow each heading with a concise but informative description of the property's physical appearance and any significance associated specifically with it. Be certain to account for all structures and areas within the boundaries of the district. Also note these numbers in question #28, the Surveyor's Evaluation box.

For all types of area forms, the amount of detail needed in the architectural description depends on the size and complexity of the area's resources and the extent of alterations, additions and deterioration. Cross-referenced current and historic photographs and maps are useful and succinct tools to describe physical change. As each photographed resource is described in the text, **include the photo number** in parenthesis, enabling the cold reader to view the photograph while reading the description. (More information on numbering photographs is on page nine, under Photographs.)

Some contextual or comparative evaluation is needed to accurately understand an area's built resources and their significance. The appropriate context in which to evaluate an area's architectural resources again depends on the historical nature of the area. For example, the resources in a small historic industrial village can be compared with other mill villages remaining in the same watershed or town. An early twentieth-century subdivision can be compared with other neighborhoods in town from the same time period. Conclude the architectural description section with a comparative evaluation of the surveyed area, considering its historical and architectural resources and their physical integrity and/or rarity. Orient the reader to the area's surrounding community and place. Focus on the facts that explain the resources' roles and illustrate their importance.

For more information on describing historical areas or districts and a list of key points to cover, see also National Register Bulletin 16A, "How to Complete the National Register Registration Form," available from NHDHR or online at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins.htm>. Completed area forms may also provide some guidance; these files are available by appointment at the NHDHR in Concord.

22. Statement of Significance:

Town-wide and project area forms: The statement of significance for town-wide and project area forms should include three sections.

First list all of the properties, sites or districts within the town or project area that have already been designated as historic. Such resources may be listed, or eligible for listing, in the National or New Hampshire State Registers of Historic Places. They may be National Historic Landmarks or recorded in the New Hampshire Historic Bridge Inventory, the Historic American Building Survey, the Historic American Engineering Record or the Historic American Landscapes Survey. (The latter three are National Park Service programs). A property or site may also be part of a local historic district or highlighted in a municipality's master plan as historically significant. Also, describe completed survey projects in the area. **Delineate** these historical designations and previous survey efforts on the sketch map or on a separate map, as space allows.

Continue with a summary of the most significant historical contexts, architectural patterns of development, or building and property types within the area. Given the general nature of research completed for an area form, it is premature to recommend Register eligibility for individual properties within the area. But it is possible to uncover important themes under which an individual property might be listed with further research.

The statement of significance should conclude with recommendations for future survey work, whether at a reconnaissance or intensive level, for individual properties or for historic districts. These recommendations may be driven by historical or architectural considerations, by community planning concerns, or a project's planning needs. It may be useful to note these survey recommendations on the area form sketch map or on a separate one.

Historic district area forms: Clearly state the reasons why and how the district meets the criteria for listing in the National or New Hampshire State Registers of Historic Places. Note the important themes or historic contexts to which the district relates (#20 above) and its level of integrity (#24 below). The statement of significance summarizes the area's historical and/or architectural importance. There is no need to reiterate the district's entire history as already described.

Historic districts are eligible for the National or New Hampshire State Registers because of their associations with important events, trends, patterns or people, for their design or construction, or for the information they may yield about our prehistory or history. If you are unfamiliar with these criteria, please contact the NHDHR or visit the division's web site at <http://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/>.

23. Period(s) of Significance:

This question only applies to historic district area forms: Based on the area's historical and/or architectural significance (#22), enter the year or the span of years when these significant events, activities, persons or trends were associated with the area. For areas with architectural importance, the period of significance is usually the date(s) of construction and the date(s) of any significant alterations and additions. For the site of an important event or historical trend, the period of significance is the time or the span of time when the event occurred. Similarly, the period of significance for a property associated with an important person will be the length of time that person was associated with the property (not always the person's entire life). Fifty years ago is used as the closing date for significance where activities began historically and continue to have importance, or when no more specific date can be defined to end the historic period. An area may have more than one period of significance, for more than one reason. Each should be listed with a brief description.

24. Statement of Integrity:

When considering historic resources, the term “integrity” refers to a resource’s ability to convey its significance through its intact physical appearance. For example, a property can only tell us about an event that happened there in 1800 if it maintains much of its c.1800 appearance. Or, a house built in the Greek Revival style cannot tell us much about that style if later renovations have removed all of its original architectural details.

Town-wide area forms: In general, describe the level of integrity, change or preservation of the community’s built historical resources. Within the last fifty years, have new patterns of development made marked changes to the town’s built environment and historic landscapes? For example, are former agricultural lands still cleared? Have new highways bypassed the town center? Have many historic structures been removed? Have those that remain been updated with modern building materials? What has been the impact of preservation activities and planning in the community? Do some areas retain greater integrity than others? If known, large clusters of historic or recent development should be marked on the town-wide sketch map.

Project area forms: Based on the area’s current appearance, known changes and historic images, describe the level of integrity and change to potential individual resources, districts and landscapes within the project area. Based on historic maps and research, have recent changes occurred that would harm or enhance the area’s historic integrity? What historical properties, buildings, structures and sites are no longer apparent in the project area?

Historic district forms: Guidance from the National Register explains that for “a historic district to retain integrity as a whole, the majority of the components that make up the district’s historic character must retain integrity even if they are individually undistinguished. In addition, the relationships among the district’s components must be substantially unchanged since the period of significance.”² In this section, discuss the relative number, size, scale, design and location of the contributing and non-contributing elements or properties in the district. A property will not contribute to the district if it has been substantially altered since the district’s period of significance or if it does not share the historic associations of the district.

Integrity considerations are always based on why, where and when a district is important, as described in the statement of significance (#22). Only after the district’s significance is established can its integrity be evaluated. Also, different aspects of integrity may be more meaningful to some types of historic properties than others. For example, integrity of design and materials may be more essential to a building with architectural significance than for a mill site, where location and setting might be vital. And finally, the rarity or poor condition of other extant examples of a type of resource may lessen the need for high levels of integrity. A more complete discussion of these and other issues of integrity is available through the National Register Bulletin No. 15, “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,” on file at NHDHR or at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins.htm>.

25. Boundary Justification:

For historic district area forms only: The boundaries of a historic district should encompass the area of land containing the concentration of buildings, sites, structures, landscapes or objects making up the district. The district’s history, built environment and integrity will determine the boundaries. In this section, provide a brief justification of this boundary, considering such factors as visual changes in historic character, differing patterns of development or uses, or boundaries of a specific time period (such as a housing subdivision or estate). The boundary should not include acreage or buffer areas that have no historical association with the district. Clearly delineate this boundary on the district sketch map (#16).

² National Register Bulletin 15, “How to Apply the National Register Criteria For Evaluation,” 1991:46.

If the boundary cannot be clearly shown on the sketch map, attach a boundary map on a continuation sheet, label it, and indicate the boundary with a dark line. Determining factors explained in the boundary justification – such as the presence of new development – should also be noted on the boundary map.

26. Boundary Description:

For historic district area forms only: Precisely describe the district's boundaries relying on established forms of measure, such as parcel, block or lot numbers, dimensions, or UTM's, or on natural or human-made features, such as rivers or street intersections.

For more information on both boundary descriptions or justifications, please see the National Register's Bulletin 16A, "How to Complete the National Register Registration Form," available from the NHDHR or online at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins.htm>.

27. Bibliography and/or References:

List all sources of information used to prepare the area form, alphabetically by the author's last name. Do not include general reference works unless they provided specific information for the form. Each citation should include the author, date of publication, title, publisher and location, and/or repository. If the bibliography is extensive, it may be helpful to organize it by category, such as books, historic maps, deeds and interviews. Appendix C provides a list of research materials and archives.

28. Surveyor's Evaluation:

For historic district area forms only: Check which boxes apply to the area and note the number of contributing and non-contributing elements for historic districts.

Photographs

For archival purposes, all photographs must be taken with black and white film that is then **developed using a black and white chemical process**. Some camera stores now use color processing to quickly develop black and white film, resulting in a sepia-colored print that can disintegrate. **Be sure to ask specifically for black and white processing.**

Using a soft pencil, label the back of the photographs with the town or city, address and area name. Photographs should be stapled to the form, using two staples. Glue or rubber cement will dry out in time, and the photographs will fall off and become separated from the form.

The number of photographs needed to document an area will vary depending on the resources present. Number the photographs, beginning with #1, using as many photo continuation sheets as needed. These numbers must be referenced in the text as each is mentioned. Fill in the sections for address, date taken negatives, roll and frame numbers and direction. Include information such as a property name, specific address, inventory number or the purpose of the view (i.e., "site of former shoe factory") under photo description. Photographs may be arranged either by age, style, type, location, or by their mention in the text. The latter is often the most helpful to the cold reader.

On the area form sketch map (#16), note the direction the photographer faced for each photo with an arrow and the photo number. If the photograph numbers cannot be clearly added to the sketch map, use a second, simplified map as the photo key.

Photographs should be clear and sharp, blocked by as little as possible. Early and late in the day during late fall, winter and early spring are often the best times to take photographs. In a crowded neighborhood, buildings are often better photographed from across the street. However, images of pavement are not helpful; make sure historical resources are the center of each photograph. Polaroids or digital images are not acceptable due to their archival instability. Photographs may be either 4"x6" or 3-1/2"x5."

Town-wide area forms: Photographing every historical resource in a town or city usually is **not practical** for a town-wide area form. Instead photograph properties that are specifically mentioned or that illustrate important historical periods and property types described in the text. Cross-reference the photo numbers in the text. Streetscape and landscape photographs are also needed to show an area's urban, agricultural or scenic context. All types of historical resources – buildings, landscapes and structures – should be recorded. If copies of historic photographs are provided with the area form, current photographs of the same view are recommended.

Project area forms: Each property, building, structure or landscape within a project area should be documented in individual or streetscape/landscape photographs. If a project area is extremely large, representative photographs that illustrate all of the historically significant aspects of the area are sufficient. Clear and consistent labeling and descriptions should correlate all of the photographs, area form text, photo key and property tables (if used).

Historic district area forms: A view of each property within a proposed district is needed, either in streetscape, context or individual views. Again, clear and consistent labeling and descriptions should correlate the photographs, text, photo key and property tables.

Appendices

- A. Town-wide Area Forms Completed and on File at the NHDHR.
- B. NH Division of Historical Resources Historic Context List.
- C. Research Sources for New Hampshire Historic Sites.